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Impressions of American Education in 1908. By SARA A. BURSTALL. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909. Pp. 329.

The author, who is head mistress of the Manchester, England, high school for girls, has twice visited the United States for the purpose of educational study, once in 1893 as a Gilchrist traveling scholar, and again in the winter of 1907-8, for the purpose of discovering a "solution to English problems of administration and teaching." Several weeks were spent in visiting typical schools and universities in the cities of the East and Middle West. The questions dealt with in the various chapters are such as would interest one who, like the author, is a college woman, the head of a large high school for girls, a teacher of history, and a member of a city school board.

In the chapter on high schools the author gives a brief résumé of the evolution of American secondary education. She is impressed by the fine, sometimes magnificent, buildings and the excellence of the heating and ventilation; the laboratories she finds not so good as in English schools, but the gymnasia much better. The good discipline of American schools strikes the author as it has all English observers. The girls seem to be neater and to carry themselves better than English girls of the same age; the boys to be less noisy, with a more intellectual type of countenance. The teachers take less part in the games and other social activities than in English schools. To this fact is traced the origin of the secret fraternities and sororities in our high schools.

The statement that "the thirty-five or so true American colleges and universities are on the same plane as those of the old world" may cause surprise to some English readers. She divides the higher institutions into three groups: the colonial colleges of the East, modeled on the English type, the state universities of the West, and the separate colleges for women. The magnificent buildings and grounds of American universities she regards "by far the most splendid and inspiring sights the country has to show." The elective system and various methods of admission to college are discussed at some length. The standard for admission into the best colleges she regards as at least as high as the ordinary matriculation standard in England, in some cases much higher. The system of "accrediting" schools she cites as an instance of American inventiveness which, "while like the sewing machine and the typewriter it brings in new difficulties of its own, has simplified toil, relieved strain, and increased the output." While refraining from expressing an unqualified opinion as to the value of the certificate system if applied in England, she recommends it to the English people as worthy of careful consideration. Considerable time was spent by the author at the University of Wisconsin, which she regards as better worthy of study by English people than any other of our universities.

The chapters on method and on the teaching of history are interesting. The difference in class method is indicated by the use of our word "recitation" for what the English call "lesson." Our method she criticizes as (1) involving a probable waste of time, (2) very dull and slow, (3) giving the teacher too little share in the exercise. The merits of the system are recognized: (1) that the pupil works for himself and does not depend on the teacher, (2) that a spirit of co-operation among the pupils is developed. The

writer was fortunate enough to see some work which convinced her that at its best the recitation method and the English oral method are almost identical in effect. She declares that she "heard finer history teaching in more than one American institution than she ever heard in England."

The principle that education in America is in a more advanced stage of evolution than in England is nowhere more marked than in the field of home economics. In the two countries the movement has developed differently: In England it has affected chiefly the primary and technical schools; in America, chiefly the secondary schools and coeducational universities. In the application of art to the home the author finds ground for her statement that "America is rapidly becoming, so far as her women are concerned, an artistic nation."

As regards commercial education the author concludes that England has much to learn from us as to methods of teaching, organization of courses, and equipment; the most valuable lesson, however, is in the fact that this education is given, contrary to England's practice, to those who have already a good general education. The movement for industrial education she observed to be the most outstanding feature of our educational life.

In the concluding chapter the author gives a summary of what she regards as best in both systems: In England (1) the simple religious education in all types of public schools, (2) the greater freedom and variety in the schools, (3) the better administrative positions held by women, whether as heads of institutions or members of boards or committees; in America, (1) certain definite ways of action both as regards equipment and methods of organization, (2) certain excellences of spirit. America has brought about the liberalization both of elementary and technical education. In university education there is "a deep distinctive purpose which makes nations act that is much to the advantage of America." The author places the great superiority of our education in the intensity and force of our belief in education. "We have very fine educational machinery," she says, in speaking of her own country, "better in some ways than that of America; but we have neither the stream nor the current to drive it; we have to turn the cranks by hand, we educators, to generate the force, such as it is, ourselves."

Miss Burstall is a keen observer, who in a whirlwind trip quite worthy of the typical American abroad visited many schools in many cities, and has given to her English readers an interesting, discriminating account, most generous toward us, of what she saw and the lessons which she feels that her countrymen may learn from an observation of the excellences and defects of American schools.

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Economics: Briefer Course. By HENRY ROGERS SEAGER. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1909. Pp. xii+476. \$1.75.

Through in part rewritten, the *Briefer Course* is in the main taken from the former and larger work, the *Introduction to Economics*. The chapters on economic history and on finance are wholly omitted. The preface states that the book is intended primarily for professional and technical schools. In view